

Remarks

It is respectfully requested that claims 1 - 24 be considered for allowance in view of this Amendment and these Remarks.

The Specification has been amended in paragraphs [017] and [018] as suggested by the Examiner.

Page 10 and the "Assignment" thereon is cancelled.

Claims 1-21 were objected to because of informalities in claims 1 and 4. Accordingly, claims 1 and 4 have been amended as suggested by the Examiner.

Claims 4-5, 12-15 and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Accordingly, claims 3, 4, 12, 13, 14, 18 and 21 have been amended to more accurately define the present invention.

For example, amended claim 3 recites "the guide comprises a first plate and a second plate which are spaced apart and parallel to each other, the plates defining a space therebetween which receives the bearing mechanism when the seat member is lowered." This is supported by Figs. 1 and 2 which show that plates 28 and 30 are always parallel. Fig. 1 shows that bearing 72 is received between plates 28 and 30 when the seat member 12 is lowered.

Claim 4 has been amended as suggested by the Examiner.

Claim 12 has been amended as suggested by the Examiner.

Claim 13 has been amended to recite "the locking element comprises a pin which projects from the second plate, an outer end of the pin having dimensions which are larger than a width of the longitudinal slot".

Claim 14 has been amended to be consistent with amended claim 13.

Claim 18 has been amended in line similar to claim 4.

Claim 21 has been amended as suggested by the Examiner.

Thus, claims 1-21 are no longer indefinite and it is respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 1-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Maruyama. Accordingly, claim 1 has been amended to more accurately define the present invention. Amended claim 1 recites that the guide extends upwardly and rearwardly from a rear portion of the seat member. This is clearly supported by original Figs. 1 and 2. In contrast, the guide rails 26 of Maruyama extend

downwardly and forwardly from the rear end of seat 14. The structure of amended claim 1 results in a more compact assembly. Thus, amended claim 1 should be allowed and such allowance is respectfully requested

Claims 2 - 21 should be allowed because they depend directly or indirectly from allowable amended claim 1.

New claim 22 should be allowed because it is essentially claim 9 in independent form.

New claim 23 should be allowed because it is essentially claim 17 in independent form.

New claim 24 has been added. New claim 24 recites that the bearing mechanism is positioned above a level of the seat member when the seat member is in its lowered position. New claim 24 also recites that, when the seat member is in its storage position the bearing mechanism has a vertical position which coincides with a vertical position of the bottom of the seat member when the seat member is in its lowered position". This is clearly supported by original Figs. 1 and 2. This structure avoids having a large base structure located substantially below the seat.

In contrast, in Maruyama when the seat 14 is raised, the bearing 46 will be below catch 80 and will be substantially below the normal level of seat 14. This requires that the base 12 of Maruyama occupy a large space underneath the seat 14. Thus, new claim 24 should be allowed and such allowance is respectfully requested.

In conclusion, it is believed that this application is in condition for allowance, and such allowance is respectfully requested.

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Respectfully,

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